

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-21 (canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) A speed reducer for use in a retractable screen system having an elongated axle extending between a pair of opposing end caps with at least a portion of the axle being coupled to one side of a retractable screen, the axle being biased to a retracted position and operable to wind the screen onto the axle's circumference to a retracted position or unwind so the screen may be extended, said speed reducer comprising:

a hollow cylindrical housing defining a speed control chamber and having a closed end and an opposing end with a central aperture, said housing further including an outer surface for coupling to a first end of said axle and an inner surface with a plurality of inwardly projecting rib elements;

an elongated shaft rotatably engaged with said housing, said shaft including one end projecting through said central aperture for engaging an end cap proximate the first end of the axle to fix rotation of said shaft and a plurality of outwardly extending rib elements inserted into said speed control chamber, said shaft being smaller in diameter than said inner surface of said housing to form a fluid receiving gap; and

a braking fluid at least partially filling in said fluid receiving gap and in fluid communication with said inwardly and outwardly projecting rib elements, said braking

fluid inhibiting free rotation of said housing relative to said shaft whereby said one end of said shaft may be connected to the end cap proximate the first end of the axle and said housing coupled to said axle to control the winding speed of the screen as the axle turns relative to said shaft.

23. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said outer surface of said housing includes outwardly projecting rib elements for engaging an interior surface of a hollow end of the axle to resist turning in relation to the axle.

24. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 23 wherein:

at least some of said outwardly projecting rib elements project at a skewed angle to the outer circumference of said housing.

25. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

an end cap includes said central aperture and is attached to said housing to cooperate with said housing to form said speed control chamber.

26. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said braking fluid is a viscous material.

27. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 26 wherein:

said viscous material is a hydraulic fluid.

28. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said speed control chamber is sealed.

29. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said outwardly projecting rib elements are rigid and extend outwardly and circumferentially in relation to said shaft.

30. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said outwardly projecting rib elements curve outwardly and radially in a uniform direction.

31. (Previously Presented) The speed reducer as recited in claim 22 wherein:

said inwardly projecting rib elements include rounded innermost regions.

32. (Previously Presented) A speed reducer for use in a retractable screen system having an elongated rolled up screen housing terminating in a pair of opposing end caps and including an elongated axle biased to a wind up position with a hollow end positioned proximate one of the end caps and a second end positioned proximate the other of the end caps, the axle projecting longitudinally between the end caps with a portion of the axle being coupled to one side of a screen and operable to rotate to wind

the screen about the axle's circumference within the screen housing or unwind the screen, said speed reducer comprising:

a elongated hollow cylindrical housing including an outer surface with a plurality of outwardly extending rib elements for slidable engagement with an interior surface of the hollow end of the axle to restrict the housing from rotating relative to the axle, said housing further including an inner surface with a plurality of inwardly extending semi-cylindrical ridges and an open end with a first fastening element;

a cap having a central aperture and including a second fastening element engaged with said first fastening element and cooperating with said housing to form a speed control chamber;

a shaft including a central post with one end extending through said cap for engaging said end cap, said post including a set of three rigid vanes projecting outwardly and circumferentially in relation to said post, said vanes extending sufficiently outwardly to slide across said ridges as said shaft rotates in said housing; and

a viscous fluid in said speed control chamber and filling in a region between said post and said inner surface of said housing whereby, upon engagement of said end of said post with said end cap and said housing with said hollow end of said axle, the rotational speed of said axle in relation to said shaft may be reduced.

33. (canceled)